

## INTRIGUE EXPOSED BY POISON PEN, GIRL COMMITS SUICIDE

When Her Lover Returned to His Wife and Child, Virginia Girl Found It Impossible to Take His Advice and Try to Live Down Past.

RICHMOND, Va., June 10.

"FACE it all and then start a new life. If things haunt you for a time, you can live them down. Remember, you did it all for love, and love will make you rise to a nobler life!"

This is the final fragment of a desperate appeal that failed to save Fannie Grasswitt from suicide, when her romance with O. S. Hunsicker, manager of the Hill Directory Company, crashed to earth. The letter was written by Miss Mattie Grasswitt, an aunt, when the writer learned that the affair had collapsed and that the girl was planning to kill herself.

Three hours after the letter arrived, Fannie was dead, a suicide by gas, in her fashionable Edgewater apartment in Chicago.

Hunsicker was married and was the father of a daughter when he met Miss Grasswitt in this city a few years ago, but he did not tell her about his wife and child.

The girl, who came of a wealthy Southern family and possessed an independent income, soon found that she loved him, and even when she learned of his wife and daughter, she could not bring herself to give him up altogether.

She introduced him proudly to her aunt, and the elder woman was strongly attracted by the gallant business man, though she never won a position approximating that of her niece in his affections.

Fannie and Hunsicker made many brief trips through Southern resorts, to Norfolk, Newport News, Washington and at times defied the conventions by spending week-ends in hotels of this city. The girl presented her lover, from her own purse, with jewels and clothing, buying them in her own name, regardless of gossip. In local department stores and having his initials engraved on silverware.

Then came the first breath of exposure. Fannie, on her aunt's advice, went to Chicago. From that point, she kept up a continuous correspondence with Hunsicker, sending and receiving fervent love letters—but she was eager to return to her home town and said so frequently in her letters to him.

He seemed to fear her reappearance among his friends. As she kept suggesting that plans be made for her home-coming, his letters grew colder and he kept urging that the move would be unwise. Finally, as though to settle the question permanently, he enclosed in a note to her, this letter, which he said had been received by his wife.

"Dear Mrs. Hunsicker: "Are you aware that your husband writes and hears daily from a certain lady? I have seen him get his mail at the general delivery window very often."

### THE EAGER INVESTIGATOR.

"I investigated a few facts. I can prove every statement I make. I think you should know about it. A baby was born and I can tell you where it was born. "After you came to Virginia to live he and this woman made three trips together. They went twice to Norfolk where they registered at the Southern Hotel as O. S. Hunsicker and wife. The other time he met her in Washington when he came from a trip through Pennsylvania, in October. "The diamond ring that he wears was never bought with his money. True, he has the receipts for the money paid made out in his name, but that was only to throw you off the track, in case you ever asked to see the receipts. "Go to Nowland & Co. and they will tell you that Mr. Hunsicker was never in that store to buy that ring, but they will tell you who came in and bought not only the ring, but other jewelry, and always his monogram, O. S. H., was engraved on it. "Not only did he accept jewelry from her, but a raincoat, traveling bag, cigarettes, magazines and numerous wearing apparel and toilet articles. He depended on her in every way while she was in Virginia and even now she is helping him. He, of course, will deny these things, but they can easily be proved in forty-eight hours. It is rumored that she will be back in town very soon, so I am giving you this tip. "A FRIEND."

And in the letter which contained



MARY FANNIE GRASSWITT

this enclosure, Hunsicker boasted to Fannie Grasswitt that when his wife showed it to him he denied it, and added that she had accepted his denial without question. So he consented to the girl's return to Richmond, but made it plain that their affair had become too dangerous to be continued any longer.

From that point the correspondence increased, and through the stacks of letters found in the Chicago apartment of the dead girl it was made plain that Fannie was prepared to accept the inevitable, but insisted that he must leave Richmond before she came back.

Oddly enough, she obtained employment in a directory corporation. After receiving his last letter, she telephoned her employers that she would be unable to report for duty that day. Then she lay down and turned on the gas.

When Hunsicker was questioned, he admitted that he had been in communication with the girl, but refused to discuss the affair.



O. S. HUNSICKER

## Larger Planes Needed to Fly Long Distances

Noted French Aviator Says Present Aero Is Not Big Enough for New York-to-Paris Journey.

PARIS, June 10. What is the future of aviation? Will the airplane eventually replace the train, the steamship and the automobile? Is the astounding air development of the past few years nearing its end? The automobile, say experts, is now perfect—it cannot be improved. How near is the airplane to similar triumph?

These questions were the basis of an inquiry made by the Paris Bureau of Universal Service among aviation experts in France.

By HENRI FARMAN. THE most remarkable event in aviation since the war has been the metamorphosis of airplanes from war use to commercial use.

The service between Paris and London, uniting the two great world capitals by a regular passenger and freight line, is undoubtedly the point of departure for great world airways which will cover the globe. From this point of view the opening of the Paris-London service marks the most important date in the history of aviation.

The principal problem to solve before aviation can take its place as the method of transportation at once the most practical and the most popular is primarily the development of the motor, which must be made as dependable and as regular as that of an automobile. Secondly, methods of more precise command must be established—perhaps electro-magnetic—permitting landing during dark nights or thick fogs.

Our house is working particularly on the engine problem and we have succeeded in perfecting

motors of 400-horsepower (twelve cylinders) and 600-horsepower (eighteen cylinders) which we hope will prove to be the ideal motors for commercial aviation. We are now making these motors for the French government.

I do not believe that a regular passenger and freight service will be established between New York and Paris. This will not be possible until the aviation organization of today is developed to take care of the resulting problems, until the radiotelegraphic and meteorologic services are perfected.

When these things are done I certainly think that a regular line between France and the United States will be possible, but at the present time no make of airplanes is capable of such sustained and continuous flight.

Of all the airplanes I have made the Goliath is my favorite. This machine has come triumphant through numerous tests all over the world and is regularly employed on the Paris-London, Paris-Amsterdam services and on numerous foreign lines. Despite its great size, the Goliath is comparatively light and can land in a small space slowly, a quality which has endeared it to experienced pilots. It is also easy to maneuver. It has won two records: Ascent to 5,100 yards with 25 passengers and ascent to 6,200 yards with 14 passengers.

Larger airplanes flying at still greater altitudes will come in the course of time and only then will non-stop flights of more than 3,000 miles be commercially practicable.

# WOMAN OFFERS TO HANG FOR MAN WHO SLEW RIVAL IN LOVE BATTLE

Bertha Bennett Proves Devotion to the Married Man Who Shot the Man She Had Cast Off—Motive in Triangular Tragedy Revealed by Amorous Letters Found in Victim's Home.

WEST HOPKINTON, N. H., June 10.

"If he is sentenced to die, I want to take his place!" This startling offer of voluntary sacrifice epitomizes the remarkable situation facing the authorities investigating the mysterious homicide here. The tragedy is one of the familiar triangular pattern, with two men at the base and a woman at the apex.

Familiar in construction but new in its development, for one of the men is dead, and the other is in prison on a charge of homicide and the woman is the sole witness to the killing!

Mrs. Bertha E. Bennett is the woman in the three-cornered tragedy staged in a bungalow that was little more than a camper's cabin in a lonely wooded district. There Charles Colby came wooing the woman and there later came Oliver Blanchette, a rejected lover of other days.

Half an hour after his arrival Blanchette was found at the foot of the stairs in the cabin, with his face wiped away by a charge of buckshot, dead. Crouching in a corner above, under the eaves, were found Mrs. Bennett, half hysterical, and Colby, sullen and speechless, and between them the shotgun that had solved the problem in so direct and primitive a fashion.

As the police led Colby, the killer, away, Mrs. Bennett cried in an outburst of emotion:

"Call it love—call it what you will, but if this man's life is in danger now because he protected me, I am willing to die instead!"

### PRIMAL EMOTIONS AROUSED.

Charles Colby contented himself with the statement that he fired in self-defense, and the woman eagerly confirmed this statement. As they told it, Mrs. Bennett was in the cabin when Colby called that morning. She was preparing breakfast for him and chatting as she brought food to the table indoors. Suddenly they heard the sound of feet through the shrubbery outside, and they saw Blanchette approaching.

Now, Mrs. Bennett is married and the foster-mother of an adopted child. Colby, too, is married. Blanchette was a bachelor of forty-four, who, the woman said, had long pursued her with unwelcome attentions. But the police offer evidence to show that the slain man's attentions were not unwelcome, and that even after young Colby entered the lists Mrs. Bennett was writing love letters to the slain man using code for the expressions of extreme endearment.

### WOMAN'S TALE OF TRAGEDY

Anyway, as Blanchette headed for the cabin the couple, in fear, ran upstairs and huddled in the shadows of the attic. Here is what followed, as Mrs. Bennett told it:

"Blanchette had come running to the house in wild fury, with eyes blazing. I knew as I saw him that the turn in our affairs had come. I felt that the curtain was to be rung down on some great event. I screamed. I ordered Colby upstairs, and fled after him.

"Blanchette started up the stairs prepared to kill me with drawn revolver. Charles brushed me aside. There was a crash of glass below and the tramp of heavy feet through the debris, as Blanchette mounted the stairs, crying:

"I'm going to kill you, Bertha." "I was between Charles and him, and Charles swept me clear of him. Blanchette actually glared at me as he called to me from the foot of the stairs and Charles Colby stepped forward to the head of the stairs to meet the field.

"Blanchette raised his pistol high, then brought it down slowly, cocking it as he lowered it. With the muzzle pointed at Colby's heart, he aimed. As he did so, Charles shot blazed out. Blanchette fell back and crashed down the stairs.

"But Charles Colby had twice risked his life for me, first when he faced the revolver in Blanchette's hand and again when he fired in my defense, for he knew not what penalty the law might exact of him for the deed. Blanchette died by his own act!"

### SPECTACULAR COURTSHIP.

Mrs. Bennett said that she had been married to John C. Bennett in Warner five years ago and that they had parted after a year. Then she had adopted the baby girl, now four years old, she said. Later she met Blanchette, a boarder in her cousin's home.

She told melodramatically of the manner in which he forced himself

on her attention, writing, telephoning, calling, in spite of all she did to dissuade him. Mrs. Bennett went on, as one who sees herself the heroine of a lurid romance.

"Then, one evening last September, he called on me, brandishing a gun. For two long, awful hours he kept the gun leveled at me, and then all the while he was painting a picture of the wedded bliss that could be ours, of the happiness I would find with him, but I refused.

"Since that hour I have lived under the shadow of that gun. Far better would it have been for all concerned if Blanchette had pressed the trigger that time and sped the bullet to my heart. Then this new blot would not have dropped on my life and on the life of that poor boy, Charles Colby."

Mrs. Bennett said that she met Colby while Blanchette's passion was still swelling with the man, and that the younger suitor's presence goaded him to desperation. She insisted that she had never given Blanchette any encouragement, and that it was only wild emotion, long maintained, that drove him to attack her with the pistol on the day that Colby emptied a shotgun shell into his brain.

### THE DAMAGING LETTERS.

But the police found among Blanchette's possessions a stack of amorous letters written to him by Mrs. Bennett, of dates as recent as a month before the killing, and these put an entirely different appearance on the entire affair, particularly on the relations between the woman and the slain man.

"Dear Oliver: "Think of my love, think of me ever.

"Think of the hell we've had together!

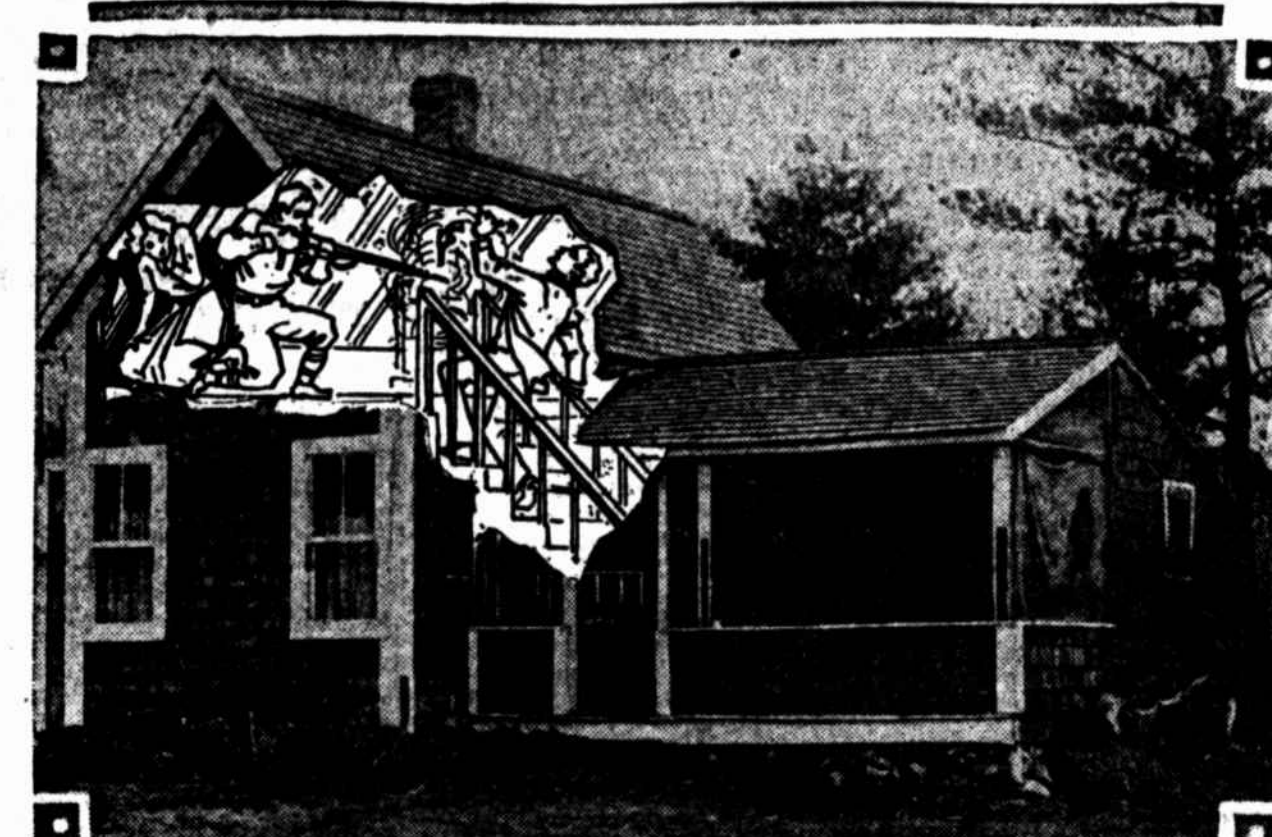
"Yours received and I do not understand you. You say that you do love me and always will at any cost. Can you still love me and

## WOULD DIE FOR LOVE!

THE APEX OF THE TRIANGLE OF DEATH!—Bertha Bennett, married and separated from her husband, was wooed by another man, who was killed by a third aspirant for her affection in the bungalow pictured below.



Bertha Bennett



talk so bad against me as you did in Concord in the recorder's court, when you gave such a record of my character?

"In my heart I believe 'hat you love me, but why do you talk so about me? You little know how much I have been through for you and how true a pal I have really been and how I made you so lucky as you were today.

"Yes, I'd love to talk privately

to you, but I have feared to since that day when you said that you would get me one way or another. My only fear in life is that if I called on you in secret you would lose your temper and our conversation might lead to guns again.

"Had I done to you as you did to me when you had Lillian, would you ever have forgiven me? No, you would have been on my trail for revenge, I fear. My heart is

silent, but if you only knew it as it speaks from day to day, your feeling would change from revenge. COLBY IS MENTIONED.

"Mr. C—— is not and never was anything to me. I never cared for him. So, if you have revenge, take it on the one you love and who will pay for it in silence.

"You may love. We all do once in a lifetime. I love the same as

## CODE OF LOVE PLAYED PART IN SLAYING

HERE is the secret code of love used by Mrs. Bertha Bennett in writing to Oliver Blanchette, the man who was killed by a younger rival for her affection:

X—Dearest.  
XX—Lonesome.  
XXX—I love you.  
AAA—Love, hugs and kisses.  
BB—Baby.  
P—Come.

you. Perhaps you are my worst enemy, but I love you. But my heart is compelled to remain dead until it has been proved that all is well.

"I'd love to talk, Oliver, but you know that I love you, and some day you will understand better. May your mind be as clear as sunshine and may God bless you and help you to know there is some one who cares."

Several of the letters are couched in phrases so extravagant as to be difficult to understand. Through them all run the initials of a love code which the police are studying and which indicates that up to within a few weeks of the killing, Blanchette stood second to none, not even Colby, in the remarkable woman's affections.

### "I AM NOT MAD!"

In one letter Mrs. Bennett wrote:

"I am not mad! I am just the same as I was two weeks ago. Remember my situation. Try to get here soon. Write any time. It is lonely and cold. I went to bed at 9 o'clock last night. I felt like aches all the time."

Blanchette, as the court records show, was arrested a year ago for threatening Mrs. Bennett's life. In one letter she seeks to explain that she was not responsible for this, but her cousin Arthur caused the warrant to be issued.

Another letter, long and rambling, suggestive of the love-sick ravings of a woman of middle age, Mrs. Bennett spoke of the coming of spring and added:

"The beautiful sunshine should drive from your heart all hatred and evil thoughts. Why not forgive and forget?"

Charles Colby's wife, from whom he has been estranged, visited him in the jail, accompanied by his father. Neither of them would discuss the case except with the prisoner and attorneys.

Later the police found a note written by Blanchette which was regarded as strong evidence in favor of Colby, for in this note the slain suitor declared that he intended to kill Mrs. Bennett and then himself, adding:

"Her letters will explain why!"

The police have withheld from publication several of the more important communications between the woman and the dead man.

### Kites Halts Business.

QUINCY, Ill., June 10.—A boy's kite halted all industrial activities for two hours here. Street car service, elevator service, the newspaper editions and the use of all machinery requiring direct current were stopped.

The kite became entangled in the power wires and short-circuited three of them.

## STANDARDS BUREAU RADIO BOOM VORTEX

THE radio boom has begun to acquaint the public with a Government institution that stands on a wooded hill in the Chevy Chase district and overlooks the universe.

In the laboratories of the Bureau of Standards atoms and planets are juggled with equal facility. The durability of shoe leather is tested in one room while an instrument to record the greatest heights of the airplane is being perfected in another.

What happens to sewer pipe exposed to alkaline conditions is ascertained in one of the bureau's six buildings, while an astronomical instrument is being tested in another. Kitchen ware is being standardized in one laboratory while battleship machinery is improved in another.

The Bureau of Standards is a unit of the Department of Commerce, but it functions for every practical activity of the Government, and its expert counsel is sought by scientists and engineers the world over.

Dr. S. W. Stratton, the director, heads a corps of scientific experts the scope and magnitude of whose work has never been equaled by any body of its type in the world. Like most of the useful workers for the Government they are overworked and underpaid. Some of them join the research depart-

ments of the large industrial corporations, which are paid to triple and quadruple their salaries, but most of them remain in the Government service at bookkeeper's wages.

The bureau is rapidly becoming

the supreme court of applied science the world over. When the municipal authorities of Johannesburg, South Africa, found acoustic faults in their new auditorium they did not send to London about it, but wrote to the Ameri-

can Bureau of Standards, describing the auditorium in detail.

From the description the acoustic experts worked out the solution on paper and sent it to Johannesburg, where the fault was corrected.

Requests for expert advice and information come to the bureau almost daily from all countries, and Washington seems rapidly to be supplanting Berlin as the scientific capital of the world.

The position of the bureau as arbiter in radio affairs was exemplified when Secretary of Commerce Hoover appointed its director, Dr. Stratton, chairman of the radio conference to formulate a governing code.

An entire building of the bureau is devoted to radio testing and experimentation. Recently the public demand for printed information on home-made radio sets has been so great that a large part of the radio division's activities have been directed toward supplying this information, which can be procured by application to the bureau or to the Government Printing Office.

### Earrings 9 Inches Long

LONDON, June 10.—Earrings nine inches long by five inches wide of carved ivory and similar materials have made their appearance in London.

## Frank White, U. S. Treasurer, Is Champion Pen Pusher

THE champion penpusher of America is Frank White, United States Treasurer.

When White gets through signing his signature several thousand times he winds up the day, eats and turns into "the hay."

But he is philosophic. If he were not he would lose more of the hair on a well-modeled dome that already is sparse in hirsute adornment.

A meter attached to White's pen probably would show that he holds the world's daily record for letter and receipt signatures.

The United States Treasurer under the law must sign personally a vast amount of correspondence, including papers of various kinds bearing upon huge amounts of currency and securities that reach the United States Treasury each day

from banks all over the United States.

Wagonloads of money are driven up to the Treasury building each day with their precious carcases from all corners of the country. A great deal of it comes in for redemption or replacement for newer currency.

It is the job of Treasurer White to account for each and every dollar of this currency. It amounts to many millions daily. He is heavily bonded.

The physical exertion of affixing his signature to so many documents leaves White at the end of an average day fairly well exhausted, but he grins and tells everybody he "should worry."

For, of all things, White is a philosopher, and he wields a wicked pen, as they say in curb talk, and scatters the most influential ink in America.